

# McIntyre Gas Plan

Thank you for contacting me regarding your views and concerns about our nation's energy policy. I appreciate hearing from you regarding this important issue.

Energy security is one of the most important issues facing our country. Ample supplies of low-cost energy are vital to our nation's economic success and independence. The energy crisis of the 1970's showed us how vulnerable we are to the world markets and the actions of foreign oil producers. Therefore, we must diversify our energy options and be less dependent on foreign sources of oil. Please be assured that I will continue to support a balanced energy plan that helps consumers, increases supply, and protects the environment.

Regarding the high cost of fuel, I have developed a 3-point G-A-S plan to help lower the cost when you fill up at the pump that fights Gouging, embraces Alternative energy, and Stabilizes prices.

First, we must work to fight price gouging. In the last 10 years, there have been over 2,600 mergers within the oil industry. These oil company mergers have increased market concentration and led to higher wholesale fuel prices in the United States. The over-concentration of market power in the oil industry provides oil companies with the opportunity to exploit market power to gouge consumers. With gas prices rising and only 23 states with price gouging legislation, a Federal law is needed to address this growing national problem. That is why I supported H.R. 5253, legislation which would prohibit price gouging in the market for gasolines, diesel, crude oil, home heating oil and biofuels. This tough legislation would prohibit price gouging at any time and is not limited to emergencies.

Second, we must expand the use of alternative energy sources and technologies. I have supported a number of measures that would promote energy efficiency and promote alternative fuels. Recently, I supported legislation that promotes clean and renewable fuels by providing incentives for renewable energies such as biomass, wind, solar and hydroelectricity. It establishes a tax credit for the purchase of hybrid and alternative power vehicles and works to award manufacturers that produce energy efficient products such as dishwashers and refrigerators. The bill improves our nation's electricity transmission capacity and reliability to stop future blackouts through the adoption of reliability standards, incentives for transmission grid improvements and reform of transmission authorization rules. It also requires greater energy conservation by establishing new mandatory efficiency requirements for federal buildings, and efficiency standards and product labeling for battery chargers, commercial refrigerators, freezers, unit heaters and other household products.

Finally, we need to stabilize prices so they remain at a fair and consistent level. The price at the pump should be set and enforced under the supervision of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). I have supported legislation that would direct the FTC to investigate and report to Congress if the price of gasoline is being artificially manipulated by either reducing refinery capacity or by any other form of market manipulation or price gouging practices.

I know a lot of families across North Carolina are suffering due to rising gas prices. That is why I have cosponsored the Low Income Gasoline Assistance Program (LIGAP) Act, H.R. 4010. This legislation will allow states to make grants to low- and fixed-income individuals and families to defray the cost of purchasing gasoline for travel to work, school, or regular healthcare appointments. Under this bill, states will make LIGAP grants to income-eligible families who meet the distance requirements. LIGAP recipients would receive \$25-\$75 per month for three months, as long as gasoline prices stay high where they live.

Small businesses are also feeling the effects of this energy crisis. To help small businesses cope with these rising prices, I have cosponsored the Small Business Fuel Cost Relief Act, H.R. 3944. This legislation would allow certain commercial farmers, fishermen, and small business owners a temporary two-year business tax credit for excessive fuel cost.